



The ThunderWord

Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217

March, 2008

Scottsdale, Arizona

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings from my corner of the hangar! It has been a couple of hectic weeks with the Cactus Fly-in and my Mother being in the hospital, so I want to apologize for getting this out a little late.

Jim Doan from Legendary Aircraft did a double-header guest speaker with Chuck Parnell from EAA headquarters at the February meeting. We normally don't have two speakers in one night but it was a very entertaining evening.

This month we are going to have Sergei Sikorsky back for an encore presentation on the family's flying boats, a subject of great interest to me.

Also, a big thanks to everyone that made this year's Cactus Fly-in the largest ever. It was great to see so many Chapter 1217 members working and in the crowd.

I hope to see everyone at the March meeting.

Curtis

MARCH CHAPTER MEETING

The March meeting of Thunderbird Field EAA Chapter 1217 will be held on Thursday, March 20th, in the Scottsdale Airport Terminal Building. The time is 7pm. This month's guest speaker will be Sergei Sikorsky who will speak on the Lindberg-Sikorsky connection. For those of you that don't know Sergei, his father Igor was the inventor of the helicopter as well as a prominent designer of seaplanes. After the presentation, Sergei will be selling and autographing copies of his book.

Remember guests are always welcome and show up early to get a good seat!

CACTUS FLY-IN

The Fiftieth Anniversary Arizona Antique Airplane Association Cactus Fly-In was held the first full weekend this month. A combination of perfect Arizona weather, calm winds and a thirty percent increase in paved aircraft parking made this year's fly-in an event to be remembered!

At noon on Saturday, 263 show planes filled every parking space on the ramp; 159 antiques and classics, 60 homebuilts and 44 warbird and large aircraft. This year two Douglas AD Skyraiders, two P-51's, one being an ultra rare H model, a Yak 11, AC-47, two AT-6's and a P-64 made up the warbird row. Almost every kind of classic and vintage plane was represented as well as the largest turnout of homebuilts in the event's history.

Chapter 1217 members came out in force to staff this year's event with the help of the new Casa Grande EAA Chapter. Everyone had a good time, ate too much, got sunburned, and got a major fix of grassroots aviation at its best. There was a hospitality trailer staffed by Chapter 1217 folks that kept the burgers cooking and cold drinks flowing all day with free food to all the volunteers.

When the sun went down, 180 folks attended an awards banquet in the terminal building where John Hickmans Bucker Jungmeister went home with Grand Champion. Another San Deigo antiquer, Bill Allen, took home the People's choice for his freshly restored Stearman that was restored to its former owner Steve McQueen's colors. Chapter 1217 member Jack Pollack's yellow Chipmunk was awarded the best Neo-Classic. Since Jack had won Grand Champion in 2007 with his Stearman it was featured on the trophies and Fly-in T-shirts.

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For a complete listing of this year's winners go to the www.CactusFlyin.org website. Next month we will have pictures of our members in action at the Fly-in. Thanks to everyone who helped out. On Saturday someone

posted the METAR from Indianapolis (IND) on the wall where it was ¼ mile in snow and 24 degrees with strong winds; makes you glad to live in the desert!



Photos from Sanders Achens R-44

Fiftieth Anniversary Arizona Antique Airplane Association Cactus Fly-In Flight Line



Jim Moss' PJ-260 Biplane



Skyraider Bob Wings in Process of Folding

GRUMMAN GOOSE BACK IN PRODUCTION

Having acquired millions in equipment and 60,000 square feet in industrial space Antilles Seaplanes might well have its first Grumman Goose seaplane rolling off the assembly line by the end of this year, bringing the famous seaplane back to life after a forty year lapse in production.

In the past 12 months, the Gibsonville, North Carolina startup, which is aiming to produce the Goose seaplane of the 1930s and 1940s, has been perfecting its manufacturing processes and getting ready for inspections by the Federal Aviation Administration.

V.L. Manuel and Jeff Manuel, partners in Antilles Seaplanes are hoping to get clearance from the FAA by the second quarter of this year to begin producing the versatile plane. If that comes through in time, the first seaplane could be ready as early as the end of the year.

When Antilles starts production, V.L. Manuel said that it will start with one assembly line, but he hopes to have four within a few years.

The company started taking orders in November, though Manuel said he doesn't have any deposits yet. He said that he has serious inquiries from Alaska to the Malaysian Coast Guard, with a mix of business, personal, and governmental interest.

BOSE HEADSET MODIFICATION

Airline pilots have embraced a wide variety of active noise reduction (ANR) products to improve communications and protect their hearing in relatively high-noise cockpits such as the ubiquitous, yet manly, Boeing 737. A popular ANR application combines the Bose QuietComfort 2 (QC2) headphones with the UFlyMike boom microphone adapter (UFM) designed by retired Southwest Captain Mike Lackey. The UFlyMike headset modification plugs into a standard Bose headset adding a microphone. The unit is passed all of its testing for the dreaded FAA TSO and according to the FAA can currently be used in any aircraft. Go to www.uflymike.com for more info, factory direct pricing and online ordering.



Bill Lewallen's Yak-11



John Levitz gets a nice ride home in a P-51H

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Chapter Website: www.ThunderbirdField.org

MONTHLY FLY-IN BREAKFAST

Be sure to mark your calendars that there is a Breakfast Fly-in the first Saturday of the month at Coolidge Airport. Everyone is invited to come down and look at the planes and enjoy a home cooked breakfast.

THUNDERWORD BY E-MAIL

Chapter 1217 members who have supplied the Chapter with a current e-mail address are receiving the Thunderword Newsletter in .pdf format as an attachment to an e-mail message sent to the membership. Software to open pdf documents is available free over the internet. The pdf version has the photographs in color.

If the e-mail version meets your needs and you no longer want the mailed paper copy, please let us know at ronkassik@cox.net. Each mailed copy costs the Chapter approximately a dollar.

CROSSWIND LANDING SIMULATOR

By: Brad Whitsitt (xwindsim.com)

Did you know that crosswinds are the number one cause of weather related General Aviation accidents every year? The NTSB counted 2,684 GA accidents that were weather related from 1995 through 2001. 25% were due to crosswinds. In fact, the top two, Crosswinds and Gusts make up 45% of weather related accidents. In comparison, Low Ceilings account for 7% and Icing just 2% of weather related accidents.

Crosswind accidents are almost never fatal, so they do not get much press. But, accidents are still traumatic and cost millions to the industry. Some in the industry believe that there are many more crosswind accidents than are reported. We all know stories of pilots who make trips through grass, mud, lights, storm drains, fences, etc. Many of us have made the trip ourselves after a crosswind landing. We have all watched crosswind landings and wondered how some pilots ever make it.

Why are there so many crosswind accidents? Here are some facts.

Low experience - Many GA pilots have very little crosswind experience. Think about it, if you can fly, you are not going to hurt yourself in the pattern. Even on final approach, as long as you can maintain speed and not hit a tree all is well. But, at the ground, when the aircraft must now work with the Earth to land in a crosswind, there is a five second window to do the right things. Look in your own logbook and count the times that you landed with a greater than 10 knot crosswind component. Now, multiply that by 5. This is the number of seconds of real crosswind experience you have in your flying career!

How can anyone be good at anything when they have only two minutes of experience? Most new private pilots are very lucky if they have 90 seconds of experience.

Low Currency - We all know that the FAA requires three takeoffs and landings every 90 days. But, there is no required currency for the more difficult crosswind landing. For many pilots, it has been a year since they had to land in a crosswind component over 10 knots.

Limited Testing - Most checkrides occur on good weather days. It is very unlikely that pilots must demonstrate landing in a +10 knot crosswind component. We all know how to talk about crosswinds on our checkride but can we do it. Even when checking out in a new aircraft at the local FBO, how many do that on a windy day. We probably don't have to demonstrate crosswind skill to them either. During flight reviews, we are likely to do that on a good weather day too. My point is that pilots can go a long way through the ratings and not know how to master crosswinds.

Hard to Practice - Even if you decide that you are going to get good at crosswinds, you must find the right weather. The wind must be strong but not too strong and other

conditions can't interfere like rain, snow, and clouds. If you are going to practice on your own, the outcome must be successful. You need to practice beyond your comfort zone in order to learn. But, you can't have an accident. Wow! what a challenge. You can get an instructor. But, then you must schedule a time and you can't schedule the conditions. Even if you want to practice, it can be hard to match your schedule, the instructor's schedule and the weather's schedule. If you get the right weather, look how long it takes to go around the airport to get five seconds of practice on each landing. Can you land 10 times in an hour? With an instructor, you can easily spend \$150 to get 50 seconds of experience, assuming other traffic does not interfere.

Instruction is Weak - Many flight instructors are not that good at crosswinds themselves. Many instructors destined for the airlines may have only 300 hours when they start instructing. How much crosswind experience do they have? three minutes? How much crosswind experience do they have from the right seat? one minute? As a Chief Flight Instructor, I have heard some very poor crosswind technique offered to students by instructors. Instruction in the industry is weak. How many pilots continue to employ improper technique because they learned it from their instructor?

There is also little incentive for an instructor to risk their tickets to help entry-level pilots get good at crosswinds. The prevailing idea is to give a student pilot the basics and let them figure out the rest on their own ticket. I was told by an FAA examiner in Chicago that he fails 60% of private pilot applicants because they have no idea how to handle an airplane in a crosswind. He has ways of testing that when it is calm. Many examiners are not

looking as hard at this issue. But, he would agree that instruction in this area is weak.

As I continue to work on crosswind instruction, there are many pilots who have been flying for 500 hours, let's say, who do not know exactly what they are trying to do in a crosswind. For example, if you believe that you need to "plant" the airplane at the highest possible speed in a crosswind, you may do this every time even though it does not work very well. It is surprising how many wrong concepts are used all the time.

You Should Know by Now - It is very hard for some pilots to admit that they really need help after they have flown for five years and still have not tamed the crosswind landing. I just want to encourage you a little. How can you do something for only two minutes with weak instruction and no testing, that you last tried a year ago, and expect to be good at it? Get some help and really dive into getting good at it. It can be fun and greatly adds to your safety factor.

Xwind, LLC has created a motion based simulator that places a pilot in a gusty crosswind forever with no risk. As a pilot, you can sit there in a cockpit that rolls, yaws, and moves laterally with no flat computer screens and you can achieve excellence in crosswind skill instead of just getting by. You will see results in the airplane the very next time you fly. Become a professional! Check out the training centers at: xwindsim.com and multiply your crosswind experience by 100!

Brad Whitsitt is an Electrical Engineer and Flight Instructor with over 4,000 flight hours. Brad is also the president of Xwind, LLC, a company dedicated to crosswind landing skill excellence. Go to www.xwindsim.com to get the entire story.

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GRENGA GN-1 AIRCAMPER PROJECT

Biplane conversion but can be switched to a parasol. Fuselage covered and Elizado Tigre engine installed. \$6000. Estate sale. Contact Lesley Morgan 480-834-4831 or e-mail Curtis at EAChapter1217@aol.com to receive a digital slideshow of the plane.

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